electronic communications device, the mask code is applied to the pseudo-random string so as to generate a volatile identification code in accordance with predetermined rules, the volatile identification code is transmitted back to the electronic computer by the specific electronic communications device or the at least one electronic communications device, the electronic computer checks the volatile identification code transmitted thereto against a volatile identification code obtained by applying the mask code to the pseudo-random string in accordance with the predetermined rules, and in which a positive identification is made when the volatile identification codes are found to match by the electronic computer, wherein the pseudo-random string comprises a first linear array of characters, each character having a given numerical position in the first array (first, second, third etc.), and wherein the mask code comprises a second linear array of numbers, each number having a given numerical position in the second array (first, second, third etc.), the predetermined rules for applying the mask code to the pseudo-random string so as to generate the volatile identification code being sequentially to select numerical positions in the first array on the basis of the numbers in the second array, taken in positional order, and to return the characters thereby selected from the first array in sequence so as to form a third linear array, this third linear array forming the volatile identification code.

2.   A system as claimed in claim 1, wherein the specific electronic communications device and the at least one electronic communications device are the same device.

3.   A system as claimed in claim 1, wherein the specific electronic communications device and the at least one electronic communications device are separate devices.

4.   (Amended) A system as claimed in claim 1, wherein the specific communications device is a mobile telephone, a pager or a personal digital assistant.

5.   (Amended) A system as claimed in claim 3, wherein the at least one electronic communications device is an EFTPOS terminal or the like.

6.   (Amended) A system as claimed in claim 1, wherein the permanent identification code is supplied in the form of a card bearing human- and/or machine-readable indicia.

7.   (Amended) A method for identifying a specific electronic communications device or user thereof to an electronic computer having stored therein data relating to the specific electronic communications device or user thereof, including a permanent identification code, a mask code and an identification code enabling communication between the electronic computer and the specific

electronic communications device, wherein the permanent identification code is input to at least one electronic communications device and transmitted thereby to the electronic computer, the electronic computer associates the permanent identification code with the identification code enabling communication there between and the specific electronic communications device and generates a pseudo-random string before transmitting this to the specific electronic communications device, the mask code is applied to the pseudo-random string in accordance with predetermined rules so as to generate a volatile identification code, the volatile identification code is input to the specific electronic communications device or the at least one electronic communications device and transmitted to the electronic computer where it is compared with a volatile identification code generated therein by applying the mask code to the pseudo-random string, and a positive identification is made when the volatile identification codes match, wherein the pseudo-random string contains at least one character that is representative of some condition of the data relating to the person.

8. (twice amended)   A method for identifying a specific electronic communications device or user thereof to an electronic computer having stored therein data relating to the specific electronic communications device or user thereof, including a permanent identification code, a mask code and an identification code enabling communication between the electronic computer and the specific electronic communications device, wherein the permanent identification code is input to at least one electronic communications device and transmitted thereby to the electronic computer, the electronic computer associates the permanent identification code with the identification code enabling communication there between and the specific electronic communications device and generates a pseudo-random string before transmitting this to the specific electronic communications device, the mask code is applied to the pseudo-random string in accordance with predetermined rules so as to generate a volatile identification code, the volatile identification code is input to the specific electronic communications device or the at least one electronic communications device and transmitted to the electronic computer where it is compared with a volatile identification code generated therein by applying the mask code to the pseudo-random string, and a positive identification is made when the volatile identification codes match, wherein the pseudo-random string comprises a first linear array of characters, each character having a given numerical position in the first array (first, second, third etc.), and wherein the mask code comprises a second linear array

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of numbers, each number having a given numerical position in the second array (first, second, third etc.), the predetermined rules for applying the mask code to the pseudo-random string so as to generate the volatile identification code being sequentially to select numerical positions in the first array on the basis of the numbers in the second array, taken in positional order, and to return the characters thereby selected from the first array in sequence so as to form a third linear array, this third linear array forming the volatile identification code.

9.   (Twice Amended) A method according to claim 8, wherein the pseudo-random string contains at least one character that is representative of some condition of the data relating to the person.

10.   (Amended)   A method according to claim 7, wherein the specific electronic communications device and the at least one electronic communications device are the same device.

11.   (Amended)   A method according to claim 7, wherein the specific electronic communications device and the at least one electronic communications device are separate devices.

12.   (Amended) A method according to claim 10, wherein the specific communications device is a mobile telephone, a pager or a personal digital assistant.

13.   (Amended) A method according to claim 11, wherein the at least one electronic communications device is an EFTPOS terminal or the like.   --

--   16.   (new)   A method according to claim 8, wherein the specific electronic communications device and the at least one electronic communications device are the same device.

17.   (new)   A method according to claim 8, wherein the specific electronic communications device and the at least one electronic communications device are separate devices.

18.   (new) A method according to claim 17, wherein the specific communications device is a mobile telephone, a pager or a personal digital assistant.

19.   (new)   A method according to claim 18, wherein the at least one electronic communications device is an EFTPOS terminal or the like.

20.   (new) A coded identification system, the system comprising an electronic computer, a specific electronic communications device that is operable to be in communication with the electronic computer, and at least one electronic communications device that is operable to be communication with the electronic computer, wherein the electronic computer includes data relating to the specific electronic communications device, including a permanent identification code, a mask

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code and an identification code enabling electronic communication between the electronic computer and the specific electronic communications device, and wherein the permanent identification code is input to the at least one electronic communications device and transmitted to the electronic computer, the electronic computer generates a pseudo-random string and transmits this to the specific electronic communications device, the mask code is applied to the pseudo-random string so as to generate a volatile identification code in accordance with predetermined rules, the volatile identification code is transmitted back to the electronic computer by the specific electronic communications device or the at least one electronic communications device, the electronic computer checks the volatile identification code transmitted thereto against a volatile identification code obtained by applying the mask code to the pseudo-random string in accordance with the predetermined rules, and in which a positive identification is made when the volatile identification codes are found to match by the electronic computer, wherein the pseudo-random string contains at least one character that is representative of some condition of the data relating to the person.

21.   (New) A system according to claim 1, wherein the pseudo-random string contains at least one character that is representative of some condition of the data relating to the person.--

REMARKS

The claims have been amended to read as set out above. The changes are shown in the attached document.

Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the limitions of claim 8 as filed. Claim 7 has been amended to incorporate the limitions of claim 9 as filed. Claim 8 has been cast in independent form. A new independent claim, claim 20, has been added which combines the limitations of claim 1 as filed with claim 9 as filed.

New claims 16-19 correspond to claims 10-13, but depend on claim 8 as amended.

New claim 21 contains the limitations of claim 9 as filed, and is dependent on claim 1 as amended.

In the British search report dated 9 February 2001 and filed with the Information Disclosure Statement on 26 April 2001, no references were cited against claims 8 and 9. Since all independent claims contain the limitations of either claim 8 or 9 as filed, it is believed that all claims are now allowable.

Applicant respectfully submits that the application is in condition for allowance. A Notice